Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph at page 17, line 21 – page 18, line 9 with the following replacement paragraph:

After a channel has been selected for assignment, the CMTS selects an idle time slot in the channel and assigns it to the CM for the new call. In this selection, the CMTS can either (1) select the lowest (or highest) idle time slot, or (2) select an idle time slot randomly. For example, first select randomly a jitter window with at least one idle time slot, and then, select the lowest (or highest) idle time slot in the selected jitter window. Time slots are numbered consecutively and identified as such. Here again, the choice of these two idle time slot assignment procedures depends on the performance desired. Suppose that the lowest idle time slot in the assigned channel is selected for assignment. This gives preference to the lower jitter window for being selected. As a result, the time slots allocated to voice calls are consolidated in the low end, leaving more idle time slots in the high end that is close to the data-only region. This helps to avoid fragmentation of large data packets. On the other hand, if the lower and upper jitter windows are selected randomly, it helps to lower the call blocking probability.

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